[50 cont.]

782 arrow in the first case and saves a person sentenced to death in a dream through the blood of a sacrificed animal in the second. (h) Furthermore, in the second case we find an apparent substitution of the personality of the individual, or better still, a partial sacrifice of the same on his handing over for sacrifice an animal owned by him. (i) In the sacrifice of animals of a ritual funerary character, we can distinguish the following effects obtained: First the propitiation of the dead man's spirit which, as may be seen in the chapter corresponding to "Magic and Funerals," 769 can be beneficial, neutral, or malicious. This depends on whether all the considerations due to his status are maintained or not, or if all or part of the taboos established in this respect in the course of the social life of the community are violated or not. Second, the confirmation of the belief of a life beyond the tomb as a reflection of the earthly life. The sacrifice, in the sense that the dead animal accompanies its owner into the next life and places him on the same social plane that he occupied in this one among his fellow spirits there, confirms such a belief in the almost material life beyond the grave. [51]

IV

Sickness and Medicine

771 If we take into account the essential characteristics of
813 primitive mentality, we should remember that their world is
181 what we might call metaphysical, since the objects that surround them do not have a real existence as they do not look at them with a truly objective discernment but allow their imagination to be deceived by the strange things around them so that these become supernatural beings, all animated, not in the physical sense of movement but in their capacity to do good or evil, or to intervene in any manner whatever in the lives of men, of other beings, and of the cosmos in general. All that relates to the surroundings of primitive people: rocks, plants, animals, natural phenomena ... , are active beings in the best sense of the word, capable of intervention and worthy of the Indian's respect,

[51 cont.]

●711 fear, or admiration. The primitive has not at this stage reached
813 the discernment necessary to establish the logical relation be-
181 tween phenomena and their real causes, but establishes a magic relationship that in the majority of cases does not correspond to any concrete or objective reality.

753 This manner of thinking and of feeling is especially reflected in the facts related to the individual himself and his organic reactions and, essentially, in the variations to which his organism is susceptible in the biological or pathological sense. To the primitive sicknesses are not ills caused by pathogenic germs (we say this in the general sense as there are some exceptions) or by internal or external disorders but are the result of the harmful actions of some being — animal, human, mineral, or vegetable — who is the sick man's potential enemy or one whom he has injured in some way or another, especially in violating the social ritual arrangements which at first were related almost exclusively to the totem and which then gradually evolved toward diverse forms of magic which lead him to a real investigatory curiosity.

This curiosity is not limited, as might be expected, to the simple act of knowing what phenomenon or what individual spirit might have caused the sickness, but sets out to understand the whole matter in order to put into [52] practice a method of cure — it does not matter of what kind — which will bring one back to the state of health, to normality, and remove him from contact with the dangerous world of the spirits.

753 For this reason, in the following pages we shall find our-
755 selves confronted with this phenomenon: if the causes of the sick-
*756 ness are magic or, in more general terms, supernatural, the methods of curing applied must be of the same type. The world of the spirits is considered to be superior to the normal world of the living, because it is unknown or partially so. The struggle then, face to face, of individual against spirit will be unequal because the latter — the spirit — is aided by supernatural forces with which the living are unacquainted. For this reason it is indispensable that shamans should be called in — the intermediaries between man and spirit, or that he employ, when

536 [140 cont.]
796 moving along the ground. Headed by their leader they all continue to sing the song of the serpent, saying more or less the following: "I am the snake. I drag myself along the ground.
[539] I do harm to no one. But he who dares to step on me because I am on the ground gets his punishment. I bite him and wound him. At times I kill him. He has to stay in bed and suffer for a long time as a punishment for having trodden on me and for thinking that I am helpless because I drag myself along the ground...." This song is repeated several times. [141]

IX

Mareiwa and Wanurú

or

Notions of Good and Evil

771 Through all the preceding chapters we have tried to explain clearly what constitutes the magic life of the Guajiro, which is almost the same as saying his spiritual life, and in passing we have mentioned the presence and activities of beings with higher powers than ordinary mortals, able to do good or evil according to which being intervenes in each particular case. We have thus touched on two fundamental ideas: good and evil.

776 Our interest is now concentrated in trying to elucidate the
177 quality of these spirits, or supernatural beings. These can be very seriously confused owing particularly to the influence of acculturation and more specifically to the pressure exerted by missionaries in their prosletyzing function. So great is the misapplication of terms and concepts in this world of ideas that we might call the religious, that even the Guajiro mythology has been transformed by the use of terms which have a pejorative and
773 degrading effect on the Guajiro people (68).

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68. This statement is based on the legend which we obtained orally from

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an Indian of the Nazaret locality relating to Mareiwa and the origin of humanity, in which are presented the beginnings of the different groups of mankind: natives and foreigners. The legend states that Mareiwa created mankind and gathered them together, inviting them to a banquet. Those who complied with the forms of social etiquette (shaking hands respectfully, sitting in the right place, behaving with composure, eating according to civilized rules, using knives and forks, washing hands, etc., were turned into arĭjuna ("white," civilizado); those who misbehaved, who did not comply with these rituals of social etiquette, that is, those who showed they were Indians, were from that time classed as wayŭ ("Indians"). As can be seen, the Indian believes himself superior [sic] to the White because of these details of social etiquette, of which he is partially or totally ignorant. [142]

The problem arises from the fact that those two notions of good and evil, represented by two classes of spirits, benign and malignant, have been changed for the Catholic or general Christian concepts of God and devil, concepts which the native, coming more and more in contact with the Christian type of civilization has gradually come to accept in the process of his conversion to new ideas.

This affirmation is corroborated by various citations, taken from the writings of Catholic or Protestant missionaries as well as from those of travelers or of ethnologists who have been involved in the same confusion. To demonstrate the point we transcribe several such cases.

Father de Carcagente referring to the church at Manaure says: "The Indians say to God 'Have pity upon us.' They know

[151] Conclusions

177 771 789

Magic shows itself to be one of the strongest institutions of Guajiro culture despite the fact that, as we have shown throughout this study, it is gradually losing its importance in proportion to the lowering of the shaman's prestige as the spiritual leader of the group. This is due to the already mentioned factors of prosletyzing and acculturation on a rising scale, brought about by the influence of a continually increasing number of civilizado elements in the peninsula, as well as by the consequences of the acculturation experienced by the members of the society. However, it is magic that still dominates many of the aspects of the native's daily life, not to say the greater part, and it is this that we are trying to synthesize and briefly explain in this chapter.

132 182 771 789

1. Economy. The Guajiro's life, as we saw in the Introduction is strictly dependent on the tyrannically dominating climate, given the conditions of the peninsula where this community lives, relying as they do on the seasonal fluctuations of rains to which they have adapted their system of agriculture and stock grazing, essential sources of their economy. As the people's livelihood directly depends on these, the Guajiro, lacking the higher techniques of irrigation and water conservation, puts his hope of survival in methods of magic, whether they be personal, collective, or directly exercised by the curer-magician of the community. These are no other than the exorcisms carried out by the latter to attract the rains in the long summers by invoking his protector spirits and especially Mareiwa, the personification of good and of rain; or the adoration and ceremonies in honor of the iguana carried out by private individuals with the same end in view; or, in short, all the methods of magic we have enumerated in connection with the natural phenomenon of rain.

[241 462]

Also in respect to the economy we must remember the presence of women when the sowing of crops is done, which establishes a division of work by sex based on the magic association of the transmission of feminine fecundity to the seeds.

177 225 789

[152] Moreover, faced with the new phenomenon of stock grazing, the native has adapted his magic methods to this, imposing the same or similar treatments used for the members of the

[155 cont.]
182 individual or of the dead, in the aspect which we have called
626 "Omens and Augural Birds," in the behavior followed by individ-
789 uals who wish to call up a breeze during a windless calm at sea or to send away eclipses and lightning which, according to their belief, are malevolent.

• • •

789 A very interesting aspect of magic is its use for and against
595 some of the cultural institutions and their institutionalized patterns; for example, the use of love charms and the compliance with certain norms after the period of seclusion accompanying the ceremonies at the time of a young woman's initiation. Her aim is to fight against polygamy, with a view either to obtaining predominance over other wives or, better, to prevent the man who has acquired her for his wife from acquiring more women with whom she would have to share his life. Possibly due to the influ-
[177] ence of acculturation, there is a tendency toward monogamy on the part of the women. The men, however, tend toward polygamy
[654] for prestige, since for it they must have a good economical position, as the price of women is high, increasingly so the greater their social position.

751 [156] Another institution that we see directly affected by
• 771 magic is this same initiation of young women. We saw how
881 the death of a first-born child required a series of ceremonies to prevent future children dying at birth, one after the other, and we stated that one of the principal ceremonies consisted in the observance of certain norms which bring to mind very clearly
[761] the initiation of the young mother. Their idea would seem to be that one of the causes of the death of the first-born was the deficient carrying out of the magic-biological-social ceremonial to which the girl must submit to prepare for her life as an adult.

764 Also the norms relating to the dead and the belief in a
775 life beyond the grave rest almost exclusively on magic, and
771 through it their prestige and their functioning are kept up. Magic
626 is also the cause of the fear and respect which relatives and friends show to their dead, and it is magic which also promotes all the ceremonial rites that are celebrated in this connection.

[156 cont.]

554 556 789 3. The individual. Another interesting social aspect related to magic is in connection with the status derived from wealth, expressed by the greater or lesser number of heads of stock owned by an individual. But apart from this strictly material aspect, magic has powers which when put into action assist the individual to acquire a coveted position or to improve one he already has, as is done, for example, in the cultural aspect of language, the mastery of which with the use of fine turns of speech can give to the speaker the highly esteemed and prestigeful position of arbitrator, or intermediary, in their interclan struggles, a position that is often confused with that of chief.

Within this field of magic activity we can cite as examples the following:

a) The sacrifice of animals, which not only gives prestige to the living but also establishes the status of the deceased in his life beyond the tomb.

b) The use of diverse charms such as those for love, for making one rich, for obtaining respect, prestige, and affection, etc.

c) The custom of an individual eating the leavings of food of individuals of special physical characteristics, especially those having qualities superior to his own, as for example, a white skin, a beard, etc., with the end of becoming more outstanding and improving his status.

d) As an indirect form of elevating status, we have the case of the Indian Kurĺra-Páta, who swallowed a charm and took a slave girl for wife in order to heal the wounds he received from the Kusina Indians. [157] The slave, because of a dream, passed to the category of wife, thus ascending the social scale.

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181 771 789 A great part of the Guajiro's personality is molded by this institution of his culture, and many of his reactions would be inexplicable without previous knowledge of the process of magic, the fields of its functioning, the ways of life it has created, the

[157 cont.]

181 mental outlook it originates — imbued, as we have affirmed, with an animistic determinism — and the beliefs it implies in the different angles of Guajiro human activity, as it will have been possible to observe throughout the length of the work we are presenting. So much is this so that the very basic impulses of the individual are seen in many circumstances to be influenced by magic.

a) To prove this in the sexual aspect it suffices for us to 834 cite again some facts already described and explained in previous chapters, such as the taboos imposed on the shamans, especially when they are women and according to which they should cohabit exclusively with their husbands, avoid caresses, motions, prolonged coitus, and pregnancy, and never exercise their functions during their menstrual periods. Besides this, it can be seen in the lifting of sexual taboos, or better said, the permitted violation of the norms which rule the community in this respect during the celebration of the Fiesta of the Kid, which reaches the point of allowing the consummation of the carnal act among the unmarried, an act absolutely prohibited in their society in normal times and which would provoke — as fully explained in the corresponding section — compensation payment and even interclan war with its tremendous consequences of persecution, annihilation, and slavery. It can also be observed in what we called the "proof of virginity," which permits a male to caress the bodies of young women who take part in the fiesta, an action prohibited, as in the previous case, in normal times. [832] Among the charms we also found some that act in this way, and also significant is the act of rubbing bixa ointment on the genital organs and breasts to make them more effective in love-making.

b) In the matter of food we saw proofs of the influence 262 of magic, especially related to the life of the shaman, particularly when he is in one of his "illumination" trances or in a curing ceremony. This influence also shows itself in the shaman's initiation, in the initiation of [158] young women, in the magic contamination of food by some animals which can cause sickness in newborn children, and in the prohibition against eating the flesh of the hawk which produces sterility in young and old of both sexes. Also, it is found in relatives being forbidden to eat the

5: Simons K-5 (ca. 1882) 1885
SC13 Goajiro SC13

172 these tumas are all made from carnelian, jasper, or other reddish varieties of silica, and the stone, according to the Indians, is not to be found in the Goajira. While ascending Macuira, several places were pointed out to me, especially near the top, in which I was entreated to look for treasure "of the Arhuaco." They themselves, although coveting tumas above everything, are, curiously enough, afraid to look for them, not hesitating, [771] however, to appropriate any found by chance. This, combined with the fear of mentioning their dead, points to some sort of religion or belief in a superior Being. They evidently took possession by conquest, 174 driving the weaker "Arhuaco" out, and have managed to assert their rights to this day. It is rather an historical anomaly that such a small [161] tribe, which probably never exceeded 80,000, should have been able to conserve intact their absolute freedom, their manners and customs uncontaminated, in spite of the accessibility of their territory, surrounded as it is by the sea, and the continual commerce that has been going on for centuries.

Commencing with the topography of the country, the mountain 133 system attracts attention most—more so, as a remarkable error has been propagated, that the Goajira is one large fertile plain with only one or two isolated hills. At least one-half of the country is hilly. There are in fact two Goajiras; one known as the Lower Goajira is the broad level plain extending from the river Rancheria to a little beyond the Teta. The other, or Upper, Goajira is the hilly sterile region between the Teta and Punta Espada. The Upper Goajira is simply a volcanic eruption, a conglomeration of low hills, conspicuous from the many cone-shaped forms, and the parallel ridges in which they have been thrown up. These parallel lines run chiefly north-west by south-east, and are separated by two large plains, thus forming three distinct groups of hills running from sea to sea. The first and most important of the three is the easterly or Macuira range. This fine, bold, interesting mountain mass rises in front of Chimare, about 12 miles from the sea-shore, and terminates at the most easterly point of the Goajira, forming the rocky headland known as the Punta Espada (Jurián). Due to its elevation and position, it serves as a species of cloud-trap detaining the lower clouds that drive in from seawards impelled by the easterly or trade winds, that blow here with great force most part of the year. This is the only spot in all the Goajira that can really be called fertile. I ascended the two highest points. The north or Macuira proper lies in front of Puerto Estrella, and is composed of several peaks ranging between 2400 and 2600 feet above sea-level. 133 241 None of them offer any difficulty in climbing, as the slopes are covered [137] with gardens to within 500 feet of the top. The vegetation is similar to that of the Sierra Nevada at 6000 feet, and the temperature was very low, showing at midday 65° Fahr. The highest point at the southern extremity in front of Punto Espada is Ara-ura. Owing to the low dense